

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Investing in Massachusetts



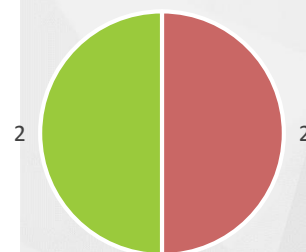
Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Created by the 2014 Farm Bill, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a partner-driven, locally-led approach to conservation. It offers new opportunities for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to harness innovation, welcome new partners to the conservation mission, and demonstrates the value and efficacy of voluntary, private lands conservation.

In 2017, NRCS is investing up to \$225 million in 88 projects that impact nearly every state in the nation, including one in Massachusetts. Since 2014, NRCS has invested more than \$825 million in 286 high-impact projects, bringing together more than 2,000 conservation partners who have invested an additional \$1.4 billion. By 2018, NRCS and partners will have invested at least \$2.4 billion. These projects are leading to cleaner and more abundant water, better soil and air quality, enhance wildlife habitat, more resilient and productive agricultural lands and stronger rural economies.

Massachusetts Projects to Date

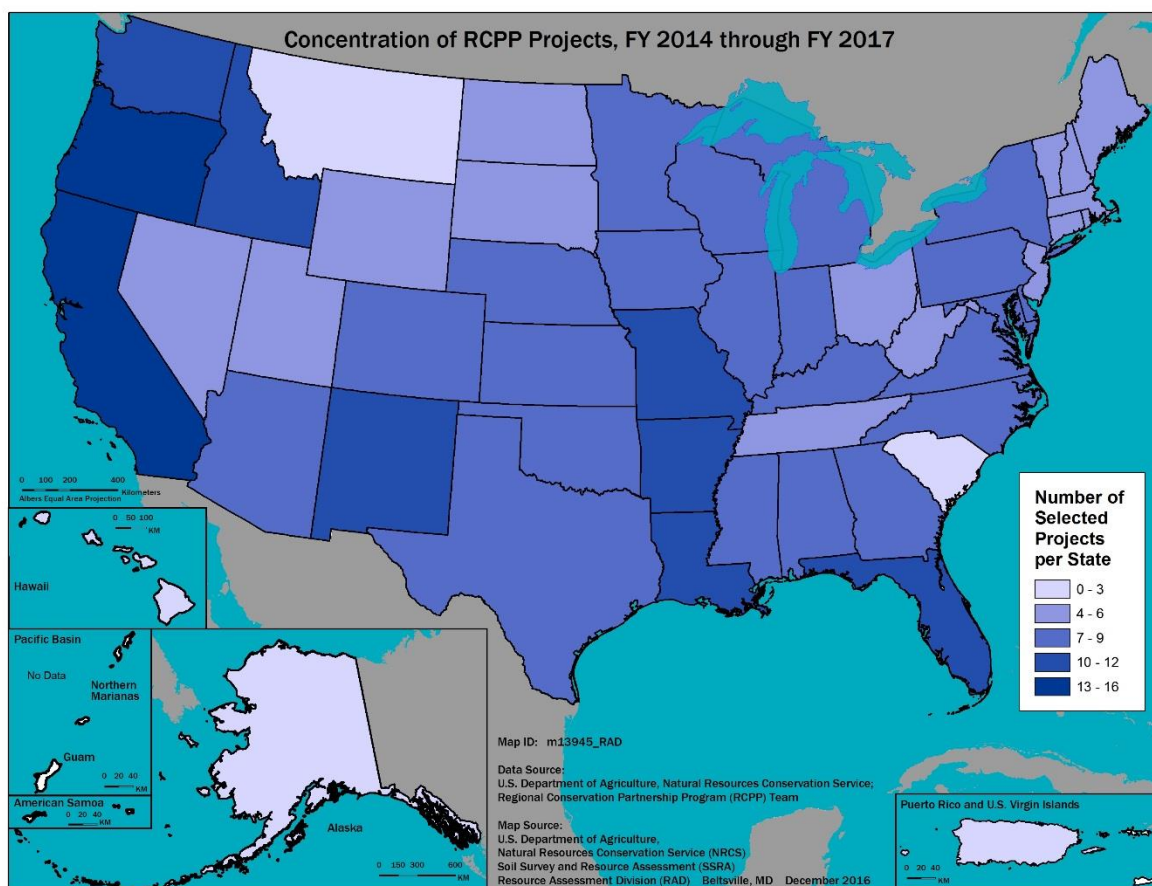
Projects by Resource Concern



4
Projects

\$16.9
million
NRCS Investment

32
Partners



Existing RCPP Projects

Year	Title	Funding Pool	Lead Partner	Number of Partners	NRCS Investment
2016	The Young Forest Initiative for At-Risk Species	National	Wildlife Management Institute	12	\$5.2 million
2014/2015	Integrating Sustainable Forestry and Energy to Support a Regional Rural Economy and Sustainable Communities in Massachusetts' Most Forested, Rural and Low Income Region	State	Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation	11	\$700,000
2014/2015	Long Island Sound Watershed RCPP	National	Connecticut Council on Soil and Water Conservation	7	\$10 million

2017 RCPP Projects

Ground Based Water Quality Implementation

Proposed NRCS Investment: \$969,650 (State)

Lead Partner: Massachusetts Association of Conservation Districts

Number of Initial Partners: 13

Participating States: Massachusetts (Lead State)

The Massachusetts Association of Conservation Districts will create a Human Portal - boots on the ground - within each conservation district to serve as a “general contractor” to help producers implement conservation practices. Producers are concerned about the complexity and administrative burdens of the federal conservation programs. The required paperwork and follow-through can impede implementation. MACD proposes to establish one staff member in every Conservation District who can serve as the “general contractor” for producers to assist them in completing the paperwork needed to not only apply for conservation funds but also manage those contracts after awarded. The overall goal is to increase the follow-through and quality of implementation on the ground. When a farmer documents the conservation practices he has applied, he would be allowed “safe harbor” from certain regulatory requirements.

